

CHITTORGARH.

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CURATOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

The History of the Rajputs is a vast sea of interesting facts. It is full of romantic deeds of chivalric heroism and endurance. Their religious fervour is almost proverbial.

The Fort of Chittor has been the pivot and the chief seat of Rajput civilization and is a standing monument of the glory of this ancient race. As such many antiquarians and historians have, from time to time, spent a lot of their energy and time in immortalizing this in their valuable works. This is a slight attempt to enlighten the large number of visitors that flock to it every year to have a view of this memorial of ancient splendour and dignity. Researches that are daily going on have created greater interest in it and brought to light several fresh facts, which have been included in this small book.

I earnestly hope that it will serve the purpose of guiding the visitors to the several interesting monuments.

I wish to express my cordial thankfulness to the authors of the various books which I used in compiling this and specially to Lala Kanhaiya Lalji Varma M. A. Principal of the Maharana's College Udaipur who very kindly went through the whole of the book and corrected the proofs thereof.

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Shobhalal Shastri.

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CHITTORGARH



H. H. Maharajadhiraj Maharana Sir Fateh Singhji Bahadur
G. C S I., G. C. I. E., G. C. V. O., of Udaipur.



CHITTORGARH.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GENERAL FEATURES.

The famous fort of Chittorgarh ($24^{\circ} 53'$ North and $74^{\circ} 39'$ East) is situated 67 miles east, north east of the capital city of Udaipur, and is approached by the U. C. and B. B. & C. I. Railways at the Chittorgarh Junction. Being a historically interesting place it draws a large number of antiquarians and tourists every year from all parts of the world.

For the convenience of visitors there is a Travellers' Dak Bungalow with 2 furnished rooms, and an accomodative Serai exists close to the Railway Station. There is a combined Post and Telegraph office both at the Railway Station and near the town. The distance to the town which is situated just at the foot of the hill, is 2 miles, covered by a metalled road. Tongas for 3 seats can be had at the Railway Station, on a hire of about Rs. 4/- per tonga for going over the hill, driving around the monuments

and back to the Railway Station. Visitors have to obtain a permit, free of charge, from the office of the District officer, near the lowest gate of the fort.

Viewed from the Railway Station at first sight the fortress of Chittor appears standing up from the surrounding plains of Mewar as a bold hill mass, 500 ft. above the country at its base and 1850 ft. above sea level extending north and south some three and a quarter of miles. The angle of ascent to its scarped summit is about 45° . Its greatest breadth is about half a mile and it covers an area of about 690 acres. The circumference of the hill at its base, is above 8 miles and is fringed with deep woods extending to the summit, with deer, hogs and even panthers lurking in it. Viewed from the top to the north, south and west the plain stretches to the horizon, roughened only here and there by some hillocks or ridges; and to the east the low land is undulating with no eminence of magnitude to strike the eye, till, at a distance of nearly three miles, the view is arrested by a long and lofty range bounding an elevated tract of hill with its adjoining valley stretching eastward as far as the Chambal. Chittorgarh thus stands out dominant and alone, save for one small, yet important exception to the south, where the main hill has a smaller attendant hill known as Chittori or diminutive of Chittor. Not uncommonly, near prominent Indian fortresses of this type, such attendant small hills come to view, as Kalinjari is

found near Kalinjar in Bundelkhand. Chittori is a mere rounded hillock 150 ft. lower, both separated and connected, by a saddle back or neck, still lower and only 150 yards in breadth. This has more than once proved a point of vantage against the great southern bastion of this mother fortress.

Rising at first, in gradually steepening slopes, clothed in jungle, the hill next stands up in bare and vertical scarps, crowned with the line of battlement which at its principal gate, Ram Pol on the west is some 350 ft. above the base; behind which and within the fortification, the ascent continues rising, though less precepitously, till in places it is 150 ft. higher. The summit is not a simple plateau, but for the purpose of a fort is better, as the greater portion presents [instead of a plateau] a long and shallow central trough of oval outline, surrounded by an elevated belt, which rises well within and above the ramparts. Though in a few places merely a narrow bare out-cropping ridge, it is for the most part broad and gently rounded or sloping inwards towards the central depression. Such is the character of the northern three-fourths as far south as Raj Tila, the highest point of the hill, which looks down on the Mori Tank in the west and the Chaugan in the north. The configuration is as if the upper layers had originally been horizontal, but sinking had occured along the middle line giving the surface a synclinal dip towards it from both

sides, at the same time tilting up the outer and exposed edges at the brow of the hill, both on the east and west.

This formation, so favourable for retaining the rainfall, has been taken advantage of for the construction of numerous tanks along the central hollow, by simply throwing bunds across it from side to side, which thus ensure an abundant and permanent supply of water. Only at three points is the oval belt of elevation imperfect or interrupted. One is at its southern bend, in the loop of which lies the Mori Tank, the bund of which fills up either an original gap, or perhaps merely a partial depression between the south extremity of the western portion of the belt and the eastern portion at the Raj Tila, from which latter point the hill continues southwards in a single line of elevation to the bastion over-looking Chittori.

The second point of interruption is near the middle of the western brow of the hill, where as viewed from below, the Tower of Victory, the larger of the two great towers, project boldly above the sky-line. Here also, however, water has been carefully treasured. Instead of being allowed to rush to waste over the cliff, it is first stored in the Hathi Kund, or elephant reservoir. Below this a few steps down the hill side, the water, percolating from above, issues by the Gomukh, or cow-mouth

spring, into a masonry reservoir; and what escapes from this appears again lower down in a tiny water fall near the foot of the hill, some way within and above the lowest gate of the fort ascent.

The third point is a little to the north of RamPol, the chief entrance to the fort. Here likewise the water is first stored in the Ratneshwar-Kund, and then below it in the reservoir known as Mataji-Ka-Kund, close by the temple of Annapurna and then again in the Kukereshwar-Kund near the rampart. Water that percolates from the last Kund flows down the hill.

The southern fourth of the hill is narrower and of single conformation, being a prolongation of the eastern portion only of the elevated belt. From the Raj Tila the hill continues some distance as a broad though rough and uneven ridge, which soon softens into a flat or rather a gently rounded surface leading to the southern bastion which has been built up high and massive to command the smaller hill Chittori and the intervening saddle back.

Such, roughly described, is the hill which, with comparatively little aid from art in the form of bastioned encircling walls near the summit, has, for the last twelve centuries, been the principal fortress of the Guhilot family.



HISTORY.

The Foundation
of the Fort.

It is difficult to ascertain the date when the fort of Chittor was originally built. Tradition ascribes it to Bhim the second of the Pandavas, who ruled at Hastinapur, near Delhi, about 5000 years ago.

The story runs that the Pandavas becoming masters of the whole of India, were travelling about in search of wealth, to enable them to perform the ceremony of Rajasuya Yajna. Bhim found his way to this spot. A Yogi named Nirbhayanath was living at Gomukh on the hill and a Yati at Kukareshwar close by. Bhim demanded from the Yogi the Philosopher's stone who, agreed to give it to him, provided he built a fort there in the course of a single night. A settlement was arrived at by the parties, Bhim, partly with his own extra-ordinary skill and strength and partly with the assistance of the gods, carved the outline of the hill into the form of a rampart and only a small portion on the southern side remained to be completed, when the Yogi requested the Yati to crow like a cock [a sign of approaching dawn] so that Bhim might give up the

attempt and lose the wager. The Yati complied, and Bhim, thinking it was dawn, dashed his foot against the ground in despair, thereby opening a reservoir of water, still called Bhimlat. Another reservoir was formed where he rested his knee and is now known as Bhim Gori. The pond where the Yati crowed is called the Kukkuteswar or Kukareshwar Kund (Kukkuta meaning a cock) and the spot, where Bhim placed the image of Mahadeo, which he kept fastened to his arm is now marked by the Nilakanth Mahadeo temple.

Subsequently the place became the capital of the Mori princes, said to be a branch of the Parmars, and was called Chitrakuta after Chitranga, who is said to have fortified the place. The tank of Chitranga Mori is still to be seen in the southern part of the fort.

It is not known how many rulers of Mori Clan followed Chitranga, but an inscription dated 770 V. S. [713 A. D.], found by Colonel Tod at the lake Manasarovara near Chittor bears the names of four kings i. e. Maheswara, Bhim, Bhoja and Mana, the last being the ruler who built this lake named after him.

Bapa Rawal, a Prince of Guhilot family and Guhilot Occupation. a direct descendant of Rama, ruled at Nagda, about 13 miles north of Udaipur. Through the blessings of a sage named Harit Rashi,

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Bapa Rawal.

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he gained special favour of god Eklingaji, and being endowed with extraordinary powers, proceeded to Chittor, where he led the forces against the Moham-medans, on their first invasion of India from Sind. After defeating and repelling them he ousted Man Singh in 791 V. S. [734 A. D.] and ruled in his stead obtaining by universal consent the title of Hindua-Surya (Sun of the Hindus) Rajguru (Preceptor of Princes) and Chackavai or Chakravarti (Universal Lord) .

Being a strong and brave soldier of enterprising nature, he extended his dominions and conquered not only the kingdom of the Moris but subdued many powerful princes of west including Kandhar, Iran etc. He built a temple of his favourite deity Eklingji near Nagda and became a Sanyasi or religious recluse in 810 V. S. [753 A. D.] .

It appears from old inscriptions found at

Early Guhilot Princes.

 various places, that the descendants of Bapa held their court first at Ahad, a town about 2 miles east of Udaipur and subsequently at Nagda the original capital of Bapa.

Sixth from Bapa was Khuman II in whose time Al-Mamun, Khalifa of Baghdad, invaded Chittor, but was driven off with the aid of allied Hindoo princes. Tod says that Khuman fought 24 battles and reigned from 812 to 836 A. D. Great grand-

son of Khuman II was Bhartri-Bhat II, two inscriptions of whose time dated 999 and 1000 V. S. [942-43 A. D.] are found. After him came Allata (inscription dated 1010 V. S. 953 A. D.) Naravahan (inscription dated 1028 V. S. 971 A. D.) and Shaktikumar (inscription dated 1034 V. S. 977 A.D.). Shaktikumar was succeeded by Amba Prasad who was killed in a battle with Chohan Vakpatiraj II of Sambhar.

Eighth from Amba Prasad was Vairi Singh who built a wall with 4 gates around the city of Ahad. His son was Vijaya Singh mentioned in a copper plate grant of 1164 V. S. [1107 A. D.] and in an inscription dated 1173 V. S. [1116 A. D.].

Fifth from Vijaya Singh was Ran Singh or Karna Singh, from whom the family split into two branches. The members of the elder branch ruled at Chittor and continued to be styled Rawal, while those of the younger branch held the title of Rana and ruled at Shishoda, whence the clan is called Shishodia. The grandson of Ran Singh was Samant Singh who invaded Gujrat. A hard fight took place, in which the king of Gujrat, who is supposed to be Ajaipal [1174-1177 A. D.], was terribly wounded and was rescued by the help of Pralhadan, the brother of Dharavarsha, the Parmar ruler of Abu.

He was succeeded by his brother Kumar Singh who, with the help of the Prince of Gujrat recovered the territory which in the time of Samant Singh was misappropriated by Kirtipal, the Chohan King of Nadol [now in Jodhpur State]. Fourth from Kumar Singh was Jaitra Singh. He was a prince of brave and war-like nature. We learn from the old inscriptions that he fought many a battle against the Chohans of Nadol, Parmars of Malwa, Sultan Shamsluddin Altamash of Delhi and Jalaluddin of Sind.

Jaitra Singh was succeeded by Tejah Singh, who seems to have transferred the seat of Government to Chittorgarh again. His son was Samar Singh. A large inscription of his time dated 1342 V. S [1285 A. D.] at Mount Abu tells us that he released Gujrat from the Mohammedans. In 1356 V. S. [1299 A. D.], Ulagh Khan, the youngest brother of Allauddin Khilji marched against Gujrat. Samar Singh defeated him on the way. Another inscription of his time is still preserved at the northern gate of the enclosure of Mahasati, at Chittor which probably was constructed by him.

Samar Singh was succeeded by Ratna Singh

First Sack of Chittor.

about 1302 A. D. A few months after his accession, Chittor, the repository of all that was precious yet untouched, of the arts of India was stormed, sacked and treated

with remorseless barbarity by the Pathan Allauddin.

(The story runs that Ratna Singh had married Padmini, a Chohan princess of incomparable beauty, whose loveliness, talents, and courage continue to be the theme of popular praise in India. Emperor Allauddin Khilji, having heard of the charms of this princess, laid siege to Chittor, for the sole purpose of getting possession of her; but the Rajputs bravely defended themselves and the Sultan, wearied at length, with a long and fruitless siege, gave up his enterprise, and requested that he might be permitted for once to see her face only through the medium of mirrors. His request was granted; and trusting to the honour of the Rajputs, Allauddin entered Chittor, satisfied his desire and left the fort. Ratna Singh wishing to show as much generous confidence as the Musalmans, accompanied him beyond the gates. This was precisely what Allauddin had intended, and the object for which he had risked his liberty. An ambuscade, which had been previously arranged, entrapped the over-generous Rajput, and he was carried off prisoner to the Musalman camp. Great was the despair of Chittor on learning the next day that Allauddin would only consent to release his prisoner in exchange for the princess. Padmini did not hesitate a moment. She publicly announced her intention to give herself up to the Sultan; but she assembled her

relations Gora and Badal and imparted to them the plan she had conceived for the delivery of her husband. Allauddin was then informed that the princess consented to give herself in exchange for Ratna Singh, on condition that she might be allowed to bring with her, as far as the enemy's camp, her companions, servants and the members of her family from whom she would have to take leave; stipulating at the same time that the laws of the Zenana should in no way be infringed.

On the following day seven hundred palinquins left the town, each borne by four armed soldiers disguised as bearers, and concealing within its curtains a chosen warrior of Chittor. On arriving at the camp, half an hour was accorded to these so-called women for taking leave of Padmini; and Ratna Singh, who was now free, rejoined his warriors and under cover of the tents, consulted with them as to the best mode of attack. At a given moment the men sprang out of the palinquins, when they were at once attacked by the Tartar soldiers; and Ratna Singh, taking advantage of the confusion, mounted a horse and returned to Chittor, while his warriors covered his retreat. It was a desperate struggle, and few of the Rajputs succeeded in regaining the fortress; but the losses of Allauddin were so heavy that, in despair he raised the siege. This was the occasion to which the Hindu historians allude,

when they say that Chittor was once half sacked; for, although it was not actually taken, the flower of the Rajput chivalry perished.

In 1303 A. D., Allauddin again laid siege to Chittor, this time for the purpose of destroying the "last refuge of the idolaters". The place was held out for about six months, but the Musalmans finally succeeded in taking the little plateau, Rawal Ratna Singh was slain and the Rajputs then saw that their ruin was inevitable. A legend of that time represents Rana Lakshman Singh, a kinsman of Ratna Singh, who came for his help, covered with wounds and broken down by the fatigues of this protracted siege, seeking some means of saving one of his sons to perpetuate his dynasty, when the tutelary goddess of Chittor, suddenly appeared and addressed him with these words:- "I must have royal victims ! Let eight crowned princes shed their blood for me, and their descendants shall reign over Mewar." The next day Lakshman Singh assembled his council and repeated to them the words of the goddess; but the old men conjured him to look upon this vision only as the effect of a disordered imagination. Upon this the goddess appeared to them and cried:- "What do I care for the thousands of barbarians whom you have sacrificed to me ! I must have royal blood. Let every day a prince be crowned; let the royal insignia, the *kirnia*

[parasol], the *chhattra* [umbrella], and the *chamar* (flappers) proclaim his accession; let him exercise sovereign authority for three days, and on the fourth day let him go forth to battle and to death. Only on these conditions will I remain with you." The Rana's sons joyfully agreed to the sacrifice, and disputed the honour of being the first victim. Ari Singh was proclaimed the first, and after a reign of four days died for Chittor. After seven of his sons had thus perished the Rana informed his warriors that it was his turn to die. He persuaded his eighth son to leave the fortress with a small escort, and secretly to escape to the Aravali Mountains. The Rajputs then prepared for death, and the horrible sacrifice of Johar was decided upon. The subterranean apartments of the Rani Bhandar where filled with inflammable materials and on these were heaped all the women, jewels, and diamonds-in fact-all that could excite the Mussulman's cupidity.

The number of women amounted to several thousands, led by their queen, the peerless Padmini, who was thus to escepe all offence to her person. The gates of the fortress were then thrown open, and its last defenders, with the Rana at their head, rushing upon Allauddin's army, perished to a man, though not without inflicting a fearful vengeance on their enemies. On entering Chittor, the Sultan found nothing but a silent and deserted town, over which still hung a cloud of foetid smoke rising from

the vaults, where all that he had coveted lay smouldering. In his rage he destroyed the buildings within the fortress, sparing only the palace of Padmini, and the Jain Tower. This dreadful event took place on 26th August, 1303 A.D. [Bhadrapada Sudi 14, 1360 V.S] A slaughter of 30,000 Hindus was ordered and Allauddin returned to Delhi placing the fort in charge of his son Khizar Khan, who built a massive bridge across the Gambhiri river, that flows near the fort.

Chittor remained under the command of Khizar Khan for about 10 years, then it was put in charge of Maldeo Sonagra, who, it is said, built a great bastion in the southern part of the hill and called it Mala Burj after his own name.

Hamir Singh the son of Ari Singh and grandson of Chittor Regained Lakshman Singh, married the daughter of Maldeo and about 1326 A. D. with the help of his wife, recovered the fort moistened by the sacred blood of his ancestors and pitched the Shishodia standard again on its summits. Mohammed Tugluk, then Sultan of Delhi, hearing the news, marched against Mewar and met the army of Hemir Singh near Singoli. A fearful fight took place in which the Sultan was made prisoner, kept for 3 months at Chittor and was set free after he had paid a handsome ransom.

Hamir Singh conquered Jilwara, killed Jaitrakarna, prince of Ider, burnt Palanpur and helped Devi Singh Hara in conquering Bundi from the aborigines Minas. Hamir Singh built a temple and a reservoir dedicated to Maha Lakshmi, which was subsequently known as Annapurna's temple at Chittor. In the words of Colonel Tod, Hamir. was the sole Hindu prince of power, now left, in India. All the ancient dynasties were crushed and the ancestors of the present princes of Marwar and Jaipur brought their levies, paid homage and obeyed the summons of the prince of Chittor as did the Chiefs of Bundi, Gwalior, Ohanderi, Raisen, Sikar, Kalpi Abu etc. Hamir was succeeded by his elder son Kshetra Singh or Khetsi in 1421 V. S.[1364 A. D.]. He conquered the country of the Hara Rajputs whose chief seat was Bundi, destroyed the fort of Mandalgarh, now in Mewar, about 40 miles north east of Chittorgarh, defeated Ami shah, [Dilawar Khan Gori] the first Sultan of Malwa, near Chittor made Ranamal, the prince of Ider, his captive and added the whole Chhappan to the territory of Mewar. He was succeeded by his son Laksha Singh or Lakha in 1382 A. D. He suppressed the Mairs who had rebelled and captured the Hilly Tract where now Badnore exists. Silver and lead mines of Jawar, 20 miles south of Udaipur, were for the first time worked in his reign and the proceeds were spent in rebuilding the temples and edifices levelled by Alla-

uddin at Chittor. The large lake known as pichhola on the margin of the city of Udaipur is said to have been built in the reign of this Maharana. The Mohammedans had imposed heavy taxes over the sacred places of Hindus such as Kashi, Prayag and Gaya. Maharana Lakha got the taxes abolished. Of Lakha's numerous sons Chunda was the eldest and the heir, when a circumstance occurred which led him to forego his right and nearly lost the Shishodias their kingdom. The Rathor Rao of Mandor sent an offer of his daughter in marriage and Chunda being absent at the time, Rana Lakha jokingly remarked that it could not be meant for an old grey beard like himself but for Chunda, as in reality it was. This harmless jest was repeated to the latter who took exception to it and declined the match, whereupon the old Rana incensed at his son's obstinacy, (as it could not be returned without gross insult to Ranmal,) accepted it for himself. Chunda agreed to renounce his birthright in the event of the Rana having a son from this marriage. Mokal was the issue of this alliance, and Chunda resigned his birthright, stipulating that he and his descendants should hold the first place in the councils of the State and that to all the deeds of grant, his symbol, the lance should be superadded to that of the Rana.

Mokal succeeded his father as the Rana between [1419 and 1421 A. D.] and for a time

Chunda conducted the affairs to the great benefit of the State but Mokal's mother becoming jealous of his influence he retired to Mandu, w' ereupon Ranamal Rathor, the Rani's brother took charge of the administration and conferred all the high places upon his clansmen. Subsequently Mewar is said to have been invaded by Firoz Khan of Nagor, who committed a great depredation but was eventually defeated and expelled by Rana Mokal. Mokal also conquered Sambhar and terrified the Lord of Delhi, defeated Sultan Ahmed Shah I of Gujrat and gained victory over Haras in the battle of Jahazpur.

He constructed a temple of Vishnu and a reservoir at Chittor which probably are the Bhimlat reservoir and the temple over it, repaired the temple of Samiddheshwar, built a wall around the temple of Eklingji and raised the dam of Baghela Talao close to it. He weighed himself against gold and silver and distributed it amongst the Brahmins. He was assassinated by his uncles Chacha and Mera, the illegitimate sons of Maharana Kshetra Singh in 1433 A. D.

He was succeeded by his minor son Rana Maharana Kumbha. Kumbha or Kumbhakarna. The affairs of the State were still in the hands of Rathors but when Ranamal caused the assassination

of Raghodeo the young Rana's uncle, such indignation was aroused that Chunda was appealed to, for help. Hastening from Mandu he arrived at Chittor, and very shortly after Ranamal and many of his followers were killed and Rathor interference in Mewar politics came to an end.

Maharana Kumbha's rule was one of great success amid no ordinary difficulties. He conquered Abu and its adjacent country from the Rao of Sirohi, defeated Sultan of Malwa in 1437 A. D. near Sarangpur and set the town ablaze. The Sultan fled to Mandu, Kumbha siezed it, made Mahmood a prisoner and kept him in Chittor for six months and then set him free without any ransom. To commemorate this Victory Kumbha erected the famous Jayastambha or the Tower of Victory dedicated to Vishnu.

He faught successfully against Kutubuddin of Gujrat several times and defeated the combined armies of the Sultan, of Gujrat and Malwa, conquered Nagor from Shams Khan, defeated Rao Jodha and captured Mandor from him and added Gagron, Narana, Ajmer, Mandsaur, Mandalgarh, Bundi, Bambaoda, Khatu, Chatsu, Narlai, Sojat, Hamirpur, Dhanera, Malarna, Sihor Ranthambhor, Amand, [in Malwa] Kotra, Bisalnagar, Dungarpur, and many other places to his kingdom. He stormed Khandela and levied tax over the salt quarry of Didwana.

Kumbha had occupied the throne for 35 years, he had triumphed over the enemies of his race, fortified his country with 32 strongholds, embellished her with temples and with the superstructure of her fame, had laid the foundation of his own. He was a great patron of arts. He repaired the fort of Chittorgarh, constructed the road leading to it and built seven gates thereon. He erected the temple of Kumbhashyamji in 1505 V. S. [1448 A. D.] at Chittor and in 1515 V. S. [1458 A. D.] built the stupendous fort called after him Kumbhalmer which is inferior only to Chittor. He built Achalgarh on Mount Abu in 1452 A. D.

Kumbha is said to have been a great poet and the author of the four original works on the science of music, four dramas, three commentaries and a work on architecture specially dealing with the construction of Kirtistambhas. His life terminated in 1525 V. S. (1468 A. D.) by the poniard of an assassin -that assassin his son ! Uda was the parricide but he is passed over in silence by the chroniclers or merely alluded to as Hatyaro or the murderer. He ruled for five years, but was so universally detested that his younger brother Raimal had no difficulty in expelling him and seizing the Gadi. Uda is said to have fled to the king of Malwa for help and to have been killed by lightning.

Raimal became Rana in 1530 V. S. (1473 A. D.) Gayasuddin of Malwa invaded Chittor and was defeated, who later on sent his Commandant Zafar Khan to be defeated again near Mandalgarh. Raimal then advanced towards Malwa and repulsed Mohammadans near Khairabad.

Prithviraj, the eldest son of Raimal made the Sultan of Malwa (of Gujrat as Tod relates) prisoner and did not release him till he paid a large ransom. He married the daughter of Solankhi Rao Surtan, and at his request captured Toda from Mohammadans and killed Lalla Pathan. During the life time of his father he was poisoned by Rao Jagmal of Sirohi who was his sister's husband.

Rai Mal was succeeded by Rana Sagram

Maharana Sanga

Singh generally known as Rana Sanga in 1566 V. S. [1509 A.D.]

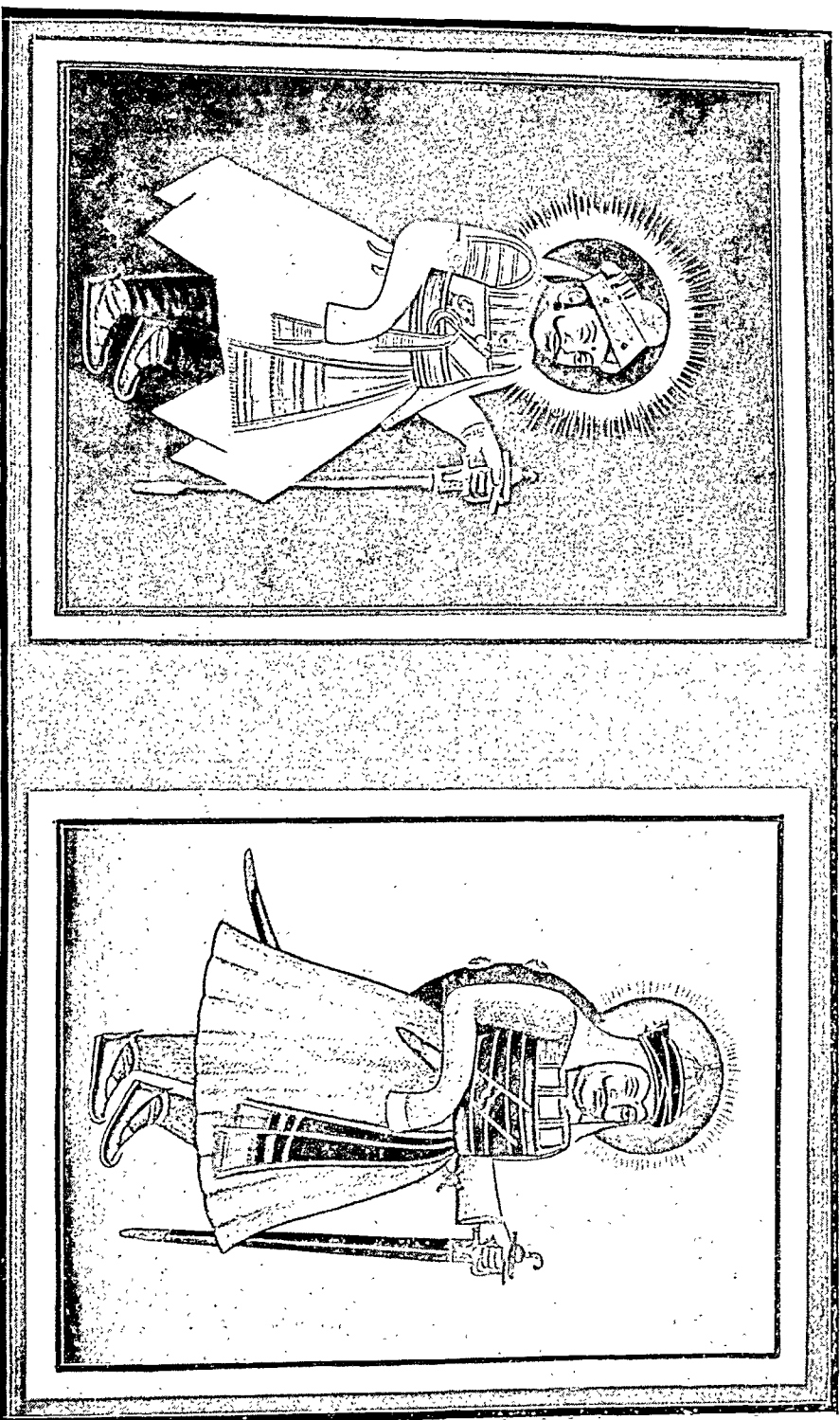
Under him Mewar reached the summit of its prosperity. His large dominion extended from the banks of the Jamna on the north to Malwa on the south; and Sind on the east, to Aravli on the west, yielding a revenue of ten crores. Tod tells us that 80,000 horses 7 Rajas of highest rank, 9 Raos and 104 Chieftains bearing titles of Rawal and Rawat with 500 war elephants followed Rana Sanga to the field. The princes of Marwar and Amber did homage and the Rao of Gwalior, Ajmer, Sikri, Kalpi, Chan-deri, Bandi Gagron, Rampura and Abu served him as

tributaries or held him in chief. Before he was called on to contend with the house of Taimur, he had gained 18 pitched battles against the sovereigns of Delhi and Malwa, in two of which he had been opposed by Ibrahim Lodi in person. On one occasion (in 1519 A. D.) he captured Mahmud II of Malwa and released him without ransom, an act of generosity which even the Musalman historians praise. Mahmud presented Maharana Sanga with a jewelled crown and a golden belt, which were used by the Sultan of Malwa as a mark of Royalty. He defeated Nizamulmulk a subadar of Sultan Muzaffer of Gujrat, and his successful storming of the strong holds of Ranthumbhor and Kandhar (now in Jaipur), gained him great renown.

Such was the condition of Mewar at the time of Babar's invasion. The Tartar prince, having defeated Ibrahim Lodi and secured Agra and Delhi, turned his arms against the Rana and the opposing forces met at Bayana in February 1527 A. D.

The garrison of that place having advanced too far into the country, was surprised and completely routed by the Rajputs and a few days later Babar's advance guard under Abdul Aziz, proceeding carelessly, was cut to pieces. These reverses alarmed the Emperor who resolved to carry into effect his long deferred vow, never more to drink wine. The gold and silver goblets and cups, with all the utensils

used for drinking parties, were broken and the fragments distributed among the poor. Babar also assembled all his officers and made them swear that "none of us will even think of turning his face from this warfare nor desert from the battle or slaughter that issue till his soul is separated from his body". In these ways the Emperor aroused the religious feeling of his army and in the final engagement fought near the village of Khanua (in Bharatpur) on the 17th March 1527 A. D. [Chait Sudi 14, 1584 V.S.] the Rajputs were defeated with great slaughter. According to Mewar chroniclers this reverse was largely due to the desertion of Salhadi the Tanvar Chief of Raisen (now in Bhopal), who went over to Babar with 35,000 horse. Rana Sanga was wounded in this battle and was carried to Baswa [now in Jaipur] where according to Tod he breathed his last but according to Mr. Ojha he again advanced to oppose Babar near Chanderi. When he had encamped at Erich near Kalpi poisoned by his own followers he died in 1584 V. S. [1528 A. D.] and was cremated at Mandalgarh. " He exhibited at his death " says Colonel Tod " but the fragment of a warrior; he had lost one eye and an arm, was a cripple owing to a limb having been broken by a cannon ball and he counted 80 wounds from sword or lance on the various parts of his body ",



Maharana Sangha or Sangram Singh.

Maharana Sanga's eldest son was Bhoj Raj. He married Miran Bai, the daughter of Ratan Singh, younger brother of Rathor Rao Wiramdeo of Merta (in Marwar), in 1573 V. S. [1516 A. D.]. Miran Bai was sincerely devoted to Shri Krishna from her very childhood, which continued even during her wedded life and after the death of her husband she devoted herself entirely to the service of God. She built many a temple, one of which is close to the temple of Kumbhashyamji at Chittor. She died at Dwarika in 1603 V. S. [1546 A. D.].

Bhoj Raj did not survive his father, so the succession to the Gadi fell to his second son Ratna Singh II. In his time Mahmud of Malwa sent his commandant Sharjah Khan against Mewar. Ratna Singh receiving this news advanced to Malwa as far as Sarangpur, (and looted Sambhal) when Sharjah Khan retired. The Maharana on his way back to Chittor met Bahadur Shah of Gujrat and was presented by him with 30 elephants many horses etc. Ratan Singh was killed by Rao Suraj Mal of Bundi whom he killed simultaneously, and was succeeded by his younger brother Vikramaditya in 1588 V. S. [1531 A. D.]

Vikramaditya alienated the attachment of his Second Sack of Chittor. nobles by neglecting them for men of low degree, such as wrestlers and prize fighters, and Bahadur Shah of Gujrat taking advantage of the feud, invaded Mewar in 1533 A. D. He was repulsed this time but returned immediately again in 1535 A. D.

with a stronger force, and bombarded the fort with cannons which the Rajputs had yet refused to employ. Musalman artillery was commanded by a European officer. He undermined the whole fortress, A mine blown at Bika Khoh completely destroyed a great part of the rampart and the bastion defended by the Hara contingent.

The Rajput nobles made a stubborn resistance, and in the absence of Rana, who was sent away from the fort, proclaimed Bagh Singh, the great grand son of Maharana Mokal and the ancestor of the princes of Partabgarh, their king, who, invested with all insignia of sovereignty, gave himself up to death to avert the wrath of the tutelary goddess.

Among the numerous acts of heroism recorded of those times the bards particularly notice the conduct of Queen Jawahir Bai, a Rathor, who armed from head to foot headed a sortie, and was killed after a terrible slaughter of the enemy. At length further resistance was found impossible. The sacrifice of Jchar was decided upon; but as there was no time to prepare the funeral pile, Queen Karnawati, therefore with all other willing victims of their doom stationed herself upon a rock which was undermined. The train was fired and thousands of women were swept at once from the record of life. The men satisfied that their honour was

preserved rushed to battle and to death. This is the Second Sack of Chittor.

The Emperor Humayun hearing the capture of the fort marched against Bahadur Shah and defeated him near Mandsaur; whereupon Vikramaditya seized the opportunity of regaining his capital. But he continued his ill-treatment of his nobles, and was assassinated in 1593 V. S. (1536 A. D.) at the age of 19 by Banvir, a natural son of his uncle Prithviraj. Banvir unsatisfied with this horrible deed advanced to kill his younger brother Udai Singh, but his foster mother Panna put her own son in his place, who was slain, and carried Udai Singh away safely from Chittorgarh. Banvir ruled for about four years but was dispossessed by Udai Singh and the nobles in 1597 V. S. (1540 A. D.)

Udai Singh founded the city of Udaipur in 1616 V. S. (1559 A. D.) built some parts of the palaces and a temple of Udaishamji there. He commenced constructing Udai Sagar lake about 9 miles from Udaipur near the famous Debari Pass in the same year, which was completed in five years.

Chittor had hardly risen from its ruins Third Sack of Chittor when on Margashirsha vadi 6, 1624. V. S. (23rd October 1567 A. D.) it was once more besieged by Akbar the great Moghal.

Rana abandoned the fort early in the siege, leaving the defence of his capital to his brave vassals. Saindas of Salumbar, and Jaimal of Badnor were posted at Suraj pol & Lakhota gates respectively. Mines were blown up by the enemy at three places near Lakhota gate, Surajpol and at Bika Khoh near Mori Tank. This destroyed the great part of the rampart. One day when Jaimal was inspecting the reparation of the wall he was struck with a bullet from the matchlock of Akbar himself at night. He desired to strike a last blow at the enemy and on account of his wound being unable to ride was carried by his clansman Kalla on his shoulders. After slaying a large number of the Musalman besiegers both of them fell between Bhairon and Hanuman Pol gates. Saindas of Salumbar was killed at the eastern gate of the fort and Futta, the ancestor of the Rawat of Amet, fell with his mother and young wife within Rampol. The Johar was performed. Nine queens, 5 princesses and more than a thousand women ascended the funeral pile while their last defenders sought death on the battle field. Thus after a siege of four months Akbar gained the fort on Chaitra Vadi 13, 1624 V.S [25 February 1568 A.D] but without any living soul within it.

The tutelary goddess had promised never to forsake this rock as long as a descendant of Bapa

devoted himself to her faithfully. To this compact, Rana Lakshman Singh, his seven sons and many other princes had suffered premature death but at this last struggle no royal victim had come forward to appease the bloodthirsty goddess. The charm was broken and the tie that united her to the Shishodias was severed.

Akbar marked his appreciation of the valour of Jaimal and Futta in a singular way, by having their effigies carved in stone and placing them on stone elephants at the gateway of his palace at Delhi.

Some months after the fall of Chittor Udai Singh returned to Udaipur and completed the palaces, but he often lived at Kumbhalgarh from whence he came to Gogunda and died there on 28th Feb. 1572 A. D. where his memorial is still seen.

Udai singh was succeeded by his eldest son Pratap Singh. Possessed of Maharana Pratap Singh the noble spirit of his race, Pratap meditated the recovery of Chittor, the vindication of the honour of his house and the restoration of its power; and elevated with this design, he hurried into conflict with his powerful antagonist. But it was not with Musalmans alone that he had

to contend but his own kindred in faith as well as blood for, the combined tact and strength of Akbar had brought to his own side the chiefs of Marwar, Amber, Bikaner and Bundi. The magnitude of the peril, however, merely confirmed the fortitude of the gallant Pratap, who sheltered in the hills caused the plains of Mewar to be desolated with the view of impending imperial forces.

The bare idea that a descendant of Bapa Rawal should bow the head to a mortal was insupportable and he spurned every overture which had submission for its basis. Single-handed for a quarter of a century did he withstand the combined efforts of the empire, at one time carrying destruction into the plains, at another flying from rock to rock feeding his family with the fruits of the hills of his motherland.

In 1576 A. D. Akbar despatched a large army under the command of Man Singh, the son of Raja Bhagwan Dass of Amber accompanied by Asaf Khan to subjugate the Rana. A desperate battle was fought at Haldu Ghati near Gogunda. Maharana fought bravely and but for the steel plate which defended his Howda the lance of Pratap would have deprived Man Singh of his life. His steed, the gallant Chetak, nobly seconded his lord, and is represented

in all historical drawings of this battle with one foot raised upon the elephant of Mansingh while his rider has his lance propelled against his foe.

Rana Pratap Singh received several wounds in this battle and was compelled to leave the battle field by his nobles who fought desperately headed by Jhala Man Singh. The battle was at last lost and on the 7th of Sawan 1632 V. S. (1557 A. D.) the best blood of Mewar irrigated the pass of Italdh Ghati.

Some two years later an army under Shah Baz Khan, with whom were associated Bhagwan Dass and Man Singh of Amber, captured the forts of Kumbhalgarh and Gogunda and generally laid waste the country.

Hemmed in on all sides and unable to struggle any longer Pratap Singh decided to abandon Mewar for a home on the Indus and had actually descended the Aravalis when his Minister Bhama Shah placed his accumulated wealth at his disposal and urged him to renewed efforts. Collecting adherents, Rana suddenly returned and surprising the Imperial forces at Dewair in the South of Merwara cut them to pieces, and he followed up his advantage with such celerity and energy that in a short campaign he recovered nearly all his territory and remained in undisturbed possession till his death at the

village of Chavand in 1597 A. D. The last moments of Pratap, were an appropriate commentary on his life, which he terminated swearing his successor to eternal conflict against the foes of his country's independence.

There is no pass in the Alpine Aravali that is not sanctified by some deeds of Pratap, some brilliant victory, or oftener more glorious defeat. Haldighati is the Thermopylae of Mewar, the field of Dewair her Marathon.

Maharana Pratap was succeeded by his son Amar Singh I who had been Maharana Amar Singh I his constant companion and the partner of his toils and dangers. Initiated by his sire in every act of mountain strife and familiar with its perils, Amar Singh entered on his career in the very flower of manhood, and during the remainder of Akbar's reign was left unmolested. Jehangir however determined to conquer Mewar and subjugate Amar Singh, whom he described as "The greatest of the Zamidars of Hindustan. All the Rajas and Rais of the country have acknowledged him and his ancestors to be their chief and head * * * not one of them has bowed the neck in submission to any king or emperor of Hind".

An army was despatched by Jehangir under the brother of Khan Khana which was defeated at Dewair in 1664 V. S. [1608] A. D. and another

under Abdulla Khan met the same fate in 1666 V.S. [1610 A. D.] at Ranpur Pass. Alarmed at these defeats he started to equip a fresh army against Mewar, and in order to excite family discord, began by installing at Chitor as Rana, Amar Singh's uncle, Sagar, who had gone over to the Moghal side in Akbar's time. He next despatched a large army under his son Parvez in 1611 A. D. but it was completely defeated near Khamnor [according to Erskine near Untala]. Fresh troops under Abdullah, Mahabat Khan, and other Amirs failed to effect the desired object, so the Emperor moved his camp to Ajmer with avowed intention of placing himself at the head of the forces employed against the Rana, because, to use his own words, he felt assured that nothing of any importance would be accomplished till he himself went thither. This was in 1613 A. D. The army was however actually commanded by his son Khurram, afterwards Shah Jahan, and it plundered Mewar.

The Rana returned to the hills and in the following year recognizing that further opposition was hopeless, made terms with Jahangir but he stipulated as a salvo for his dignity and that of his successors, exemption from all personal attendance. Accordingly though the heirs-apparent of Mewar attended the court, they never did as Rana.

Amar Singh abdicated the throne, which he could no longer hold save at the will of another, in 1616 A. D. in favour of his son Karna Singh II, and observing that honour of Mewar was now in his hands forthwith left the capital and secluded himself in Nauchowki; nor did he, from that hour, cross its threshold but to have his ashes deposited with those of his fathers in 1620 A. D.

Karna Singh ruled till 1628 A. D. when he Maharana Karna Singh was succeeded by his son Jagat Singh I. (1628-1652) and through this period Mewar enjoyed perfect tranquility. Karna Singh built a part of the Island Palace on the Pichhola Lake at Udaipur and it was completed by Jagat Singh after whom it is called Jagmandir. Prince Khurram, ere he succeeded to the empire as Shah Jahan, had his own period of trouble, during which he took refuge from his father's anger at Udaipur. Special buildings were erected for him at Jagmandir. In token of friendship he exchanged turbans with the Rana and his turban is still preserved in its original folds and is exhibited at the Victoria Hall Museum at the Capital. It is worthy of notice that it was in the same Island Palace that a number of English families had a hospitable home in the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. A. D.

The next Rana was Raj Singh I [1652 1680 A. D.] who signalised his accession by plundering-Malpura and other imperial cities.

In 1662 A. D. a terrible famine occurred and Maharana Raj Singh [Raj Singh to relieve the population, commenced the lake at Kankroli called after him Raj Samudra which, with its marble bund, cost him more than a crore; and founded a town known as Raj Nagar. He constructed several palaces here as well as at other places and it was in his time that Shrinathji, the celebrated god of Nathdwara came in Mewar. When Aurangzeb imposed the capitation Tax [Jazia] on Hindus, Raj Singh demonstrated by letter in a style of such uncompromising dignity, such lofty yet temperate resolve, so much of soul stirring rebuke mingled with a boundless and tolerating benevolence, such elevated idea of divinity with such philanthropy that it may challenge competition with any epistolary production of any age, clime or condition. It was however of no avail and war ensued during which Aurangzeb directed immense forces against the Rajputs in 1680 A. D. which destroyed many temples at Chittor, Mandalgarh and Udaipur, but were severely defeated at Gogunda and Chittor. He weighed himself against jewels, which were distributed in Charity.

Jai Singh II succeeded him in 1680 A. D. He concluded a treaty with Aurangzeb in which the right of imposing the capitation tax was renounced.

He constructed the dam of the famous Dhebar lake, called after him Jai Samudra which is regarded to be one of the largest artificial lakes of the world being nine miles long and five broad.

His son Amar Singh II became Rana in 1698 A. D. and 10 years later, Triple alliance formed an alliance with the Maharajas of Jodhpur and Jaipur for mutual protection against the Musalmans. It was one of the conditions of this compact that these chiefs should regain the privilege of marriage with Udaipur family which had been suspended since they had given daughters to the Emperors to wed, and that the son of an Udaipur princess should succeed in preference to any elder son by another wife.

Amar Singh died in 1710 A. D. and was succeeded by his son Sangram Singh II under whom the State prospered. Bahadur Shah conferred the Pargnas of Pur and Mandal on Mewati Ranbaz Khan, who supported by a large army, advanced to take possession but he was defeated and slain at Hurra by Rana's troops. On the accession of Furr-ukh Siyar, Mewar, Jodhpur and Jaipur commenced operations by expelling the Moghul officers and demolishing the mosques which had been erected upon the sites of Hindu temples. Shortly afterwards the Rana concluded a treaty with the King of Delhi.

Marahata Trouble

Sangram Singh was followed by Jagat Singh II in 1734 A. D. During his rule (1734-1751 A. D.) the Marahatas vexed greater and the surrender to them by Mohammed Shah of Chouth or one fourth part of the empire opened the doors to the demand of the claim from all the territories subordinate to it. Accordingly in 1736 A. D. the Rana concluded a treaty with Baji Rao by which he agreed to pay Rupees 1,60,000 annually to the Peshwa.

Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur had a son Madho Singh by a daughter of Maharana Amar Singh II, and an elder son by another wife. On Jai Singh's death in 1743 A. D. Isri Singh succeeded at Jaipur, but Rana Jagat Singh supported by arms the claims of Madho Singh and on being defeated called in the aid of Malharrao Holkar, and agreed to pay him 80, Lakhs of rupees, on the deposition of Isri Singh. The latter is said to have poisoned himself, while Holker received in part payment the rich district of Rampura which was thus lost to Mewar.

The successors of Jagat Singh were his eldest son Pratap Singh II (1751-1754 A. D.) his Grandson Raj Singh II (1754-1761 A. D.) His second son Ari Singh II [1761-1773 A. D.] Throughout their rule the ravages and exactions of the Marahatas continued, and the country was impoverished. Soon after Ari Singh's succession the

forces of Holkar under the pretext of recovering arrears advanced almost to the capital and were only checked by a payment of Rs. 51,00,000/-. In 1764 A. D. a famine afflicted the land and a few years later nobles formed a party to depose Ari Singh and set up a youth called Ratan Singh alleged to have been the posthumous son of Rana Raj Singh II. To succeed in their design, they called the Scindhia who after a severe battle near Ujjain in 1769 A. D. invested Udaipur city which was saved by the talent and energy of the minister Amarchand. In 1771 A. D. the rich province of Godwar, which had been made over temporarily to Maharaj Bijai Singh of Marwar to preserve it from the pretender Ratan Singh was lost, as the Rathor denied to give it up. Maharana Ari Singh was killed by Maharao Ajit Singh of Bundi when out shooting with him in 1773 A. D. It will be remembered that Rana Ratan Singh II and Rao Suraj Mal, while shooting together in Bundi jungle killed each other in 1531 A. D. In consequence of these unfortunate incidents there is a feud between the two houses which is not yet forgotten.

Ari Singh was succeeded by Hamir Singh II in whose time Marahata trouble continued. It has been estimated that upto 1778 A. D, when Hamir